

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

**Applicant(s):** Hirokazu Nishimura, et al.      **Examiner:** Atia K. Syed  
**Serial No:** 10/667,865      **Art Unit:** 4185  
**Filed:** September 22, 2003      **Docket:** 17044  
**For:** DIAGNOSTIC SUPPORT  
APPARATUS      **Dated:** January 9, 2009  
**Conf. No.:** 1153

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**RESPONSE TO SPECIES ELECTION**

Sir:

Pursuant to the species election requirement imposed in the Official Action dated December 9, 2008, Applicants elect the claims of Species A, readable on claims 1-14 for continued prosecution herein.

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**CERTIFICATE OF ELECTRONIC FILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Patent & Trademark Office via Electronic Filing through the United States Patent and Trademark Office e-business website, on the date set forth above.

Dated: January 9, 2009

/Thomas Spinelli/  
Thomas Spinelli

Claims 1-22 are present in the above-captioned application and have been subjected to a species election under 35 U.S.C. § 121. Specifically, the Official Action avers that the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention are present in the claims:

Species A, readable on Figures 1-14, drawn to diagnostic support apparatus and method with possibility to create diagnostic support information;

Species B, readable on Figures 15 and 16, drawn to information processing apparatus with creation and management of image and table lists; and

Species C, readable on Figures 17-22, drawn to diagnostic support apparatus with blood vessel extraction means.

It is the Examiner's position that the species listed as Groups A, B and C are patentably distinct from each other.

In response to the Examiner's requirement for species election, Applicants elect to prosecute the subject matter of Species A, readable on claims 1-14. However, Applicants reserve the right under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected subject matter in this application.

In view of the foregoing, an examination on the merits of the elected claims, at an early date, is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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